

ANIMAL REMAINS FROM OHIO ROCK SHELTERS

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A number of rock shelters in Ohio have been examined for archaeological remains over a period of many years, and some of these have been reported in publications. With one or two exceptions little attempt has been made to identify more than the usual, commonly found and easily identified species like the deer, elk, bear, raccoon, and wild turkey. As there has accumulated from excavations representative collections from several rock shelters, we were interested to know just what kinds of mammals and birds were recovered and are available in our Ohio State Museum collection.

To bring this material up to date as well as examine all of the material available, the rock shelter animal remains were recently studied and additional identification was made where possible. The remains from Ash Cave excavated by the writer in 1928 had already been studied, as well as those from Twinsburg rock shelter in Summit county. What remained to be studied was the material from Kettle Hill shelter and the mammal remains from Canter Caves; also the re-examination of material excavated by Dr. Wm. C. Mills at Boone and Buzzard rock shelters in Jackson county in 1905.

The animal bone material in the rock shelters is not numerous as compared with that found in the village sites. When one considers the limited space in these shelters and the fact that only a small number of persons camped or lived in them at a time, one would not expect the accumulation to be very great. There is also the possibility that much of the bone material was merely tossed out of the shelters and washed down the slopes below.

A knowledge of what kinds of animals are represented from the bone material left in the shelters by the Indians is of interest for several reasons. Several kinds of animals, particularly birds, were living in Ohio in the early days that no longer are here and some are extinct. It gives some idea of the former fauna of a region and may be the only means of securing definite examples of occurrence; the last source of collecting *actual specimens* or *parts* of extinct species, that once occurred in Ohio. To the archaeologist it gives some information on the food secured by the Indians, as well as the kinds of animals killed for their fur, feathers or bones used for tools, implements, and ornaments.

The shelters included in this study are Ash Cave in Hocking county, Kettle Hill in Fairfield county, Boone, Buzzard and Canter Caves in Jackson and Twinsburg rock shelter in Summit county. All of these shelters have some animal bone remains in varying amounts and only three of these have been completely excavated. These are the two Canter Caves, namely "Indian" and "Echo" caves, and the Twinsburg rock shelter.

ASH CAVE

Ash Cave is perhaps the most widely known of all the rock shelters in Ohio and is located about four miles east of Bloomingville, Benton Township, Hocking county. It is situated on the west side of a steep ravine, at the head of which is a much larger "wet cave" and waterfalls. The ravine is a scenic area and is now a State Park which is visited throughout the year, the public attractions being the scenic beauty of the area and the large "wet cave" at the head of the hollow.

The first examination of Ash Cave was made about 1876 by E. B. Andrews for the Peabody Museum and published in 1877 in the Tenth Annual Report of the Peabody Museum. In his report Andrews (1877) mentions animal remains as follows:

"It was a confused mass of sticks for arrows, stalks of coarse grasses, *food bones in great variety*, bits of pottery, flints, nuts, corn cobs etc."

Later examination was made by Warren K. Moorehead and Thomas Wilson (1895). Among other things mentioned as found by them are "*bones hardened by fire.*"

In April 1928 the writer spent three days in making a test trench in the floor of the cave and in an area 8 x 10 feet all of the animal bones now available for study were found. These represent bones of the following animals:

<i>Mammals</i>		<i>Birds</i>	
Black Bear.....	2	Duck.....	1
Skunk.....	2	Wild Turkey.....	8
Wild Cat.....	1	Passenger Pigeon.....	1
Gray Squirrel.....	3		
Rabbit.....	1	<i>Reptiles</i>	
Elk.....	1	Box Turtle.....	13
Deer.....	124		

Of interest in this small series of bones is the greater number of deer bones, and the finding of the Passenger Pigeon.

KETTLE HILL CAVE

This cave is perhaps one of the largest in the area which has been known for many years to contain Indian artifacts and has been excavated by local collectors. In the spring of 1927 the writer and the late H. C. Shetrone examined a small portion of the cave. Later Dr. E. F. Greenman and the writer examined another part of the cave and all material recovered from these excavations as well as that found earlier by the writer are now in the Ohio State Museum collection.

Among the animal remains from this shelter the following have been identified:

<i>Mammals</i>		Gray Squirrel.....		23
Opossum.....	7	Fox Squirrel.....		1
Short-tailed Shrew.....	1	Flying Squirrel.....		60
Black Bear.....	3	Beaver.....		3
Raccoon.....	7	White-footed Mouse.....		3
Mink.....	2	Cooper Mouse.....		2
Skunk.....	2	Muskrat.....		1
Dog.....	17	Brown Rat.....		3
Gray Fox.....	1	Rabbit.....		11
Wild Cat.....	3	Elk.....		6
Woodchuck.....	7	Deer.....		166
Chipmunk.....	1	Horse.....		3
<i>Birds</i>				
Trumpeter Swan.....	1	Domestic Chicken.....		5
Ruffed Grouse.....	1	Wild Turkey.....		6
Prairie Chicken.....	2	Passenger Pigeon.....		29
Bobwhite.....	2	Crow.....		1
<i>Turtles</i>				
Box Turtle.....	73	Snapping Turtle.....		2
<i>Frogs</i>				6

There were also salamander bones found in the feces from a burial and identified by Dr. Case of the University of Michigan.

Here again the bones of the Deer are by far the most numerous, and it is interesting to note that the greatest number of bird bones are of the Passenger Pigeon. Other interesting bird remains include the Trumpeter Swan, and the Prairie Chicken.

Several species listed are without doubt introduced into the site in recent times. These are the various mice, the Horse and possibly the Flying Squirrel. The mice

and Squirrel may have been brought into the cave by owls, the bones coming from the pellets of these owls. The Chicken bones are of recent origin.

BOONE ROCK SHELTER AND CAMP SITE

This shelter was excavated by Dr. Wm. C. Mills in 1905 as was the camp site immediately in front of the shelter. In his report Mills (1912) mentions animal remains from the shelter as follows:

"The animal bones usually expected to be present in the habitation sites of prehistoric man were few within the shelter, and no doubt many had been carried away by former searchers; however specimens of the bones of the Virginia deer, black bear, raccoon, and wild turkey were secured".

Mills lists the bones found in the camp site and all were found in the recent study except the Otter. Since all of the material carries Boone Rock Shelter accession number this material is listed together.

The animals identified from this site are as follows:

Mammals

Black Bear.....	10	Gray Squirrel.....	1
Raccoon.....	5	Beaver.....	3
Skunk.....	1	Domestic Pig.....	1
Cougar.....	1	Elk.....	24
Woodchuck.....	1	Deer.....	233

Birds

Mallard Duck.....	1	Wild Turkey.....	9
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Fish

Catfish.....	2	Drum Fish.....	2
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<i>Mussels</i>	17
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BUZZARD ROCK SHELTER

This shelter was also excavated by Dr. Wm. C. Mills in 1905 but very few bones were found in it. Only one bone of the Elk and three bones of the Deer were found.

TWINSBURG ROCK SHELTER

This shelter which is located in Summit county was excavated by Mr. Charles Shipman and others. The material was sent to the Ohio State Museum for study, in 1944, and the animal remains were identified by the writer.

The shelter contained considerable contact material such as old crockery fragments, broken clay pipes etc., confirming a report that a man lived in the cave in relatively recent times. The finds certainly bear this out, as do the animal bones, those of the Ox or Cow being found.

The following animals were identified from this shelter:

Mammals

Opossum.....	3	Woodrat.....	8
Big Brown Bat.....	13	Cooper Mouse.....	1
Black Bear.....	12	Meadow Mouse.....	2
Raccoon.....	67	Muskrat.....	4
Mink.....	1	Woodland Jumping Mouse.....	5
Wild Cat.....	6	Porcupine.....	18
Woodchuck.....	13	Rabbit.....	82
Chipmunk.....	2	Domestic Pig.....	7
Gray Squirrel.....	25	Deer.....	259
Beaver.....	97	Ox or Cow.....	13

Birds

Wild Turkey.....	22	Barred Owl.....	1
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Perhaps the most interesting find in this shelter was the remains of the Woodrat. This is a considerable extension of the known range of this mammal in Ohio, the only other records for northeastern Ohio being a report from Tuscarawas county,

Langdon (1881) and another from Ashland county, Kirtland (1838). Here again we find the most abundant mammal to be the Deer. Another interesting find is the Woodland Jumping Mouse. Those which I do not consider associated with the Indian occupation of the shelter are the Jumping Mouse, Big Brown Bat, Cow, Cooper Mouse, Meadow Mouse, Woodrat and possibly the Chipmunk. Here is also shown the comparative abundance of the Beaver and Porcupine, a condition that is often noted in the northern Ohio Indian village sites.

CANTER CAVES

These caves consist of two large rock shelters, one known as "Indian Cave" and the other known as "Echo Cave". They are situated about five miles northwest of Jackson in Jackson county, Ohio and were excavated by the owner Mr. George N. Miller in 1925. A report by Shetrone (1928) on the finds from these caves mentions the commoner species of animals found.

The bird bones from this site were sent to the National Museum for identification and reported in the Wilson Bulletin, Wetmore (1932). This report lists 19 species identified including the first report of the Mississippi Kite in Ohio. In a re-examination of material from these caves one other bird species was identified.

The animal bones from these caves are as follows:

Mammals

Opossum.....	14	Chipmunk.....	1
Black Bear.....	11	Gray Squirrel.....	43
Raccoon.....	158	Flying Squirrel.....	2
Mink.....	2	Beaver.....	27
Skunk.....	72	Woodrat.....	4
Dog.....	6	Muskrat.....	3
Gray Fox.....	9	Porcupine.....	5
Gray Wolf.....	6	Rabbit.....	44
Wild Cat.....	13	Domestic Pig.....	1
Cougar.....	4	Elk.....	51
Woodchuck.....	25	Deer.....	344

Birds

Mallard Duck.....	2	Prairie Chicken.....	1
Blue-winged Teal.....	7	Bobwhite.....	1
Wood Duck.....	4	Wild Turkey.....	51
Ring-necked Duck.....	2	Passenger Pigeon.....	30
Lesser Scaup Duck.....	5	Barred Owl.....	2
Swallow-tailed Kite.....	1	Flicker.....	1
Mississippi Kite.....	2	Pileated Woodpecker.....	2
Red-shouldered Hawk.....	1	Raven.....	2
Duck Hawk.....	1	Crow.....	1
Ruffed Grouse.....	9	Grackle.....	1

Turtles

Box Turtle.....	52	Snapping Turtle.....	5
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Mussel Shells.....206

In the above list it is again the deer that is the most abundant animal found. Of interest also among the mammals is the discovery of the Porcupine which has been found in only one other rock shelter in Ohio, the Twinsburg shelter. The Woodrat record is also of interest. Among the birds the best records are the Mississippi Kite, Passenger Pigeon, Raven and Prairie Chicken.

SUMMARY

This paper brings together information on animal remains secured from archaeological excavations of six rock shelter sites in Ohio. A total of 2845 bones were examined and 2620 specimens identified, representing 32 species of mammals, 23 of birds, 2 of turtles and 2 of fish. The deer was the most abundant mammal found in all of the shelters. Other mammals of some special interest are the Woodrat, Porcupine, and Woodland Jumping Mouse. In the list of birds the

Mississippi Kite represents the only known record of this species for Ohio; the Passenger Pigeon, found in three of the shelters, was the most abundant bird at in Kettle Hill shelter; the Raven was found in one shelter and the Prairie Chicken in two shelters. The remains of the Cow, Horse, Pig and Chicken are not surprising among these bones since the shelters were often visited by picnic parties and others in recent times. It may be noted that the shelters which have produced the largest number of bones are those that have been completely excavated, which includes Canter Caves and Twinsburg rock shelter; the others were only partially excavated.

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